

Charleston Fire Department



Information for Applicants

FIREFIGHTER TRAINEE



The Position

Requirements

The Firefighter Trainee must be at least 18 years of age, possess a valid driver's license and meet one of the following:

- Bachelor's Degree or higher.
- Associates Degree with two (2) years of prior paid fire, EMT (Basic, Advanced or Paramedic) or military experience.
- High school with four (4) or more years of paid fire, EMT (Basic or Advanced) or military experience, or two (2) or more years of paramedic experience.

EMT (Basic, Advanced and Paramedic) certification must have a minimum of 1 year left on certification. See section "immediate disqualifiers" for a listing of concerns which may deem an applicant unable to continue in the process.

The Application-Hiring Process

The hiring process includes a physical agility test, written examination and oral interview process. Candidates selected must complete a background check, psychological evaluation, and a comprehensive medical evaluation.

Step one: Apply online at www.charleston-sc.gov/employment (only online applications will be accepted) a 10 year driving record must be attached with application.

Step two: Applicants selected to move forward will be invited via email to attend an (optional) physical agility test (PAT) practice session (September 14th - 16th) and take the PAT (September 20th or 21st).

Step three: Applicants who have successfully passed the PAT will be eligible to take the written test (September 22nd or 23rd).

Step four: Applicants who have successfully passed the PAT and written test will be invited for an oral board interview (October 15th or 16th).

*All testing events are scheduled to be held in Charleston, SC. Candidates who have passed all requirements may be selected based on the needs of the City.

Firefighter Trainee

Charleston Fire Department

The firefighter trainee is an entry level fire suppression, prevention, and emergency response position for the CFD. This classification exists solely for those who are completing their initial fire department training in the CFD recruit academy. Upon completion of the required training, personnel will progress into the position of a probationary firefighter.

Under close supervision in a training capacity, the firefighter trainee will receive instruction in:

- Response to emergency calls for fire, medical, and other emergency situations.
- Operating equipment and related apparatus under the direction of an instructor.
- Basic skills to perform all activities necessary to assist in the suppression of fire including advancing lines, directing water and fire extinguishers, climbing ladders, and creating openings for ventilation or entrance.
- Responding to medical emergencies, assessing emergency medical problems, and performing emergency medical treatment in absence of paramedics.
- Salvage work and site clean-up.
- Search and rescue for trapped or injured persons from motor vehicle accidents and other situations including threat to human life.
- Operating specialized fire vehicles/equipment (fire engines, ladder trucks, pumps, tenders, saws, hydraulic tools, etc.).
- Pre-fire planning of buildings for fire hazards, including location of exits and fire protection devices. A variety of fire prevention activities, and programs including training, and fire investigations.
- Activities and operations in response to natural or man-made disasters, major accidents, incidents involving hazardous materials, and other emergency situations.
- Cleaning and maintaining station facilities, grounds, equipment, and apparatus to ensure a constant state of readiness for emergency calls.

Physical tasks and environmental conditions:

- Candidates must be able to: climb ladders and stairs and work at considerable heights; lift, carry, drag, pull and push very heavyweights; perform work in physically demanding and adverse conditions, including heat, smoke, fire, high temperatures, humidity and cramped spaces; exposure to allergenic and potentially harmful substances and dust exist.



Veterans we are thankful for your service!

Preference Points

A five point preference will be awarded on the written exam for honorably discharged veterans or service members currently serving in the United States Armed Forces. To qualify for the veteran's preference, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have separated under honorable conditions from any of the branch of the armed forces of the United States after having:
- Served on active duty for 181 consecutive days or more.

The above documentation must be received prior to the written examination for veteran preference points to be awarded. We are proud to offer the following additional resources to Veterans:

- Certified VA approved School
- Veteran On-the-Job Training

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Do you have other questions?

Download the firefighter trainee recruitment guide here for additional information regarding the position, the hiring process and the recruit academy.

Contact for any other inquiries:

Cassandra McSwain-mcswainc@charleston-sc.gov
B.J. Danner-dannerb@charleston-sc.gov

Firefighter Trainee Compensation and Benefits

Charleston Fire Department 2016 Pay Scale		
	Hourly	Paramedic Hourly
<i>Firefighter - Trainee</i>		
<i>High School Diploma</i>	\$14.50	\$15.52
<i>Associates Degree</i>	\$15.23	\$16.30
<i>Bachelor's Degree</i>	\$15.99	\$17.11
<i>Master's Degree</i>	\$16.79	\$17.97
Upon completion of recruit school projected compensation (step 1)		
	Hourly/Annual	Paramedic Hourly/Annual
<i>Firefighter</i>		
<i>High School Diploma</i>	\$11.16 / \$33,736	\$11.94 / \$36,094
<i>Associates Degree</i>	\$11.72 / \$35,429	\$12.54 / \$37,908
<i>Bachelor's Degree</i>	\$12.31 / \$37,213	\$13.17 / \$39,812
<i>Master's Degree</i>	\$12.92 / \$39,057	\$13.86 / \$41,898
Annual increase of 5% on anniversary date for total of 8 steps		

The City of Charleston is proud to offer a competitive benefits package to supplement our employees' total compensation package. Some of these benefits include:

- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Group Dental Insurance
- Group Health Insurance
- Optional Deferred Compensation Plan
- Optional Life Insurance And Disability Plans
- Paid Sick Leave
- Retirement Plan
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Vacation Leave
- Wellness Programs

Immediate Disqualifiers

An applicant whose background includes any of the following concerns would not be permitted to continue in the selection process.

Criminal History

- Conviction of any felony or any crime involving moral turpitude
- Conviction of any crime which carries a 6 month jail sentence or more
- Any conviction of domestic violence, including simple assault against a domestic partner, spouse, child or parent; or
- Adult commission of undetected crimes of a serious or repetitive in nature

Traffic Violations

- Three or more negative points on a South Carolina Operator's license or the equivalent for out of state license
- Points may be negated by attending defensive driving school offered by the Division of Motor Vehicles prior to initial testing; or
- Any conviction of driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol, refusal to take blood or breath test, eluding police, racing, or leaving the scene of an accident within the last 5 years.

Drugs

- Any involvement in the sale or distribution of illegal drugs as an adult;
- Juvenile involvement in the sale or distribution of illegal drugs is an area of concern which will be given careful scrutiny in the context of the full review;
- Any illegal possession of heroin, cocaine, hallucinogens or any other schedule 1 or 2 drug, or any derivative thereof, within the last 7 years.
- Illegal possession of anabolic steroids within the last 3 years; or
- Illegal possession of marijuana or a derivative thereof within the last 24 months. \

Others

- Dishonorable discharge from any military service;
- Untruthfulness and/or intentionally withholding of information on any application, interview or paperwork association with this position. Examples of intentional withholding of information would include deliberate inaccuracies or incomplete statements; or
- Cheating on any exam or testing associated with the possession

Note

This is not meant to be an exhaustive listing of background disqualifiers. Applicants who are successful in the initial testing will undergo a thorough background investigation. Areas of concern will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis within the context of the full review. Examples of the areas of concern may include but are not limited to the following:

- Reduction of charges as a result of a plea agreement or other form of sentencing disposition prior to a conviction in any of the aforementioned criminal and driving history categories;
- Crimes committed against a juvenile, including undetected crime;
- Patterns of reckless and/or irresponsible driving;
- Multiple convictions of driving under the influence;
- Illegal drug possession that does not fall within the parameters of the above;
- Less than honorable discharge, erratic work record, or unfavorable work employment references;
- Pending litigation or prosecution for criminal offenses must be resolved prior to consideration for employment.